

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

## POPULAR

### LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 883.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1880.

PRICE 1½d.

#### OCEAN RELIEF DÉPÔTS.

BY CAPTAIN W. PARKER SNOW.

For over twenty-five years have I endeavoured, both here and in America, to awaken an interest in the matter of saving life, property, and wreck at sea, and in dangerous localities at home and abroad. My ideas were embodied in a paper read before the Royal Colonial Institute in June 1870, and also in communications to the press, both before and since. The paper was entitled 'On the Colonisation and Utilising of certain Ocean Islands and Waste Spaces about the World ; with Suggestions for Floating Telegraph Wires, and Stationary Relief Détôts, Coal Détôts, Harbours of Refuge, Lights, Beacons, Observatories, Postal and Telegraph Stations, Training Schools, Reformatories, &c.

Now, it is this colonising or occupying waste spaces on certain ocean routes, that I propose as a means of establishing relief détôts and harbours of refuge about the globe.

I need not say how wedded we are as a people to all that is connected with the sea. Even those whose pursuits are of a contrary character, love the ocean and its life-bestowing powers. Indeed, our very existence is mainly sustained by a certain sort of supremacy we still hold upon it. Our ships sail in every clime, and our flag has for some centuries past been the pioneer everywhere of exploration and discovery. But it is also a well-known fact, that despite the superior qualities nowadays of ships, officers, and men, wrecks and loss of life are quite as great, if not greater, than ever. Of wrecks, no fewer than five hundred and fifty-nine were reported in four and a half months, and in some cases the sacrifice of life has been enormous. Yet I do not hesitate to say that if we would, as a people, study the cause of humanity more than the mere making of wealth, most of these wrecks could be avoided, and the major portion of the loss of life averted. Indeed it has appeared strange to me that so little away from our own coasts has been done in regard to this,

We have telegraphs over houses, beneath houses, and under oceans. We have railways here, there, and everywhere, in labyrinths and mazes that absolutely confuse the mind, and yet raise our admiration. We have a postal system that is truly marvellous ; and as for our travel by ships with steam, the term of floating palaces may well be applied to the roomy and luxurious accommodation afforded. More have we that could be named as existing now which did not exist a generation ago.

Science has made rapid strides in the one direction of increasing wealth, and in some few things bearing upon humanity ; but, as yet, we have hardly any practical and ready means of saving life and averting wreck at sea. Look at any nautical chart of the world, and perceive the many isolated and desolate spots upon it—some lone islands and rocks, such as St Pauls on the Atlantic Equator—St Pauls and Amsterdam in the South Indian Ocean—Tristan d'Acunha—the Aucklands—and many more I could name. What are they ? See them, hither and thither about the ocean ! Are they to be mere instruments of destruction to man and man's property ? Assuredly not, if rightly used instead of being disregarded. Nearly all of them, even the most apparently barren, teem with wondrous life, and might be made the dwelling-places of happy people. Those isolated rocks and islands, and that especial archipelago around Cape Horn, at the extremity of South America, are admirably situated for purposes of benefit to man in the direction I have indicated. Even in their natural state they are not all unproductive. Coal is already discovered in the once dreaded Magellan Straits ; and wealth, almost unbounded, is, I firmly believe, yet to be found in Tierra del Fuego. But the guano-beds, and the seal fishery—apart from mineral yield—are in themselves a source of lucrative return for investment. It is, however, the *humane* feature in connection with these places I now most draw attention to, and I ask : Can we not, then, turn them to good account ? I feel assured that we can, and, to explain myself, let me take readers on an imaginary voyage with me.

Beginning with our own coasts, there we see lights and beacons, and everything to guide and to warn; consequently, when wrecks do occur, they are—with exceptions—too often produced by over-confidence, and a neglect of what the late Captain Maury well termed the three *L*'s—namely, log, lead, and look-out. Still, even here something might be done. Our sea-channels are often enveloped in fog, and mariners from long voyages are not always so strong in mind or body as when they started. Thus, to relieve them, I, years ago, suggested that our extra naval ships, or reserve fleet might, instead of idling in harbour, be more usefully and indeed more educationally employed as a *cordon* at the mouth of each channel, with pilots, and relief stores on board, besides telegraphic wires to the mainland.

In 1849 an ocean telegraph was deemed a visionary idea, and I well remember in New York, how the actual originator and proposer of such a scheme was considered by many—even then by Mr Cyrus Field himself—as projecting an impracticability. For twenty years my plan of a *floating telegraph* over the ocean world has been similarly regarded; though I noticed lately that others, almost literally to details, have put forth the idea as their own.

Let us consider that if such plan were adopted as I propose of buoying up a duplicate cable at say three hundred miles apart by hulks, serving as relief store-ships, lightships (*numbered*, and thus shewing positions), what a valuable boon it would become. Ocean traffic would then be relieved of much of its danger, and suffering at sea greatly lessened. A wreck, a fire, or any other disaster could promptly be remedied by a knowledge of these relief hulks, and, as I also propose, of the many ocean rocks and islands serving in a similar way; while messages could be immediately flashed across the floating wires to call for aid, or give information. For the North Atlantic itself, twenty relief hulks, buoying a duplicate cable, attached to alternate hulks, kept in position by auxiliary steam-power, would almost bridge that part of the ocean world, and make the voyage across, nearly one of mathematical precision and safety. In like manner could such be applied to South America, and elsewhere. My plan embraces a postal system as well, and how many other islands and rocks—some 'barren,' such as St Pauls and the Roccas shoals; and some fertile, as I myself know from personal visits, such as Fernando-de-Noronha, could be made exceedingly available. Let me, then, carry my voyager with me to the once dreaded Cape Horn, and shew him the splendid harbours, safe and roomy, with the excellent wood and water, fish and birds, that there abound.

I first saw the Horn when passing it in March 1836. It was a beautiful evening, and being helmsman at the time, I had a good view. Six years later, I again passed it in the depth of winter, and so cold that our rigging was frozen, and a man had to be lowered frigid from the top-gallant yard, whither he had been sent on a job. A third time, in 1853, I saw the Cape, as a gale drove us rapidly past it. Two years afterwards I was exploring its neighbourhood, finding many excellent harbours, shelters, and safe channels, and running under the grim Horn itself to get a fair look at its form. Since then I have not

ceased, at every opportunity, to call public attention to the subject of a small settlement, or at least a harbour of refuge, being formed there. I have said, again and again, that the numbers of wrecks occurring at that place, and at the Falkland Islands, *could be avoided*; and despite its old terrors, I maintain there is no safer spot in the world than Tierra del Fuego and Cape Horn. Were it an unbroken, abrupt, iron-bound coast, like parts of the Australian sea-board, I could not aver this. But an archipelago of islands, with numerous safe *running* channels, splendid harbours, and other advantages such as at the extreme of South America, cannot be, comparatively speaking, a dangerous locality. The harbours are easy of access, and a good *lee* can be obtained, outward and homeward, in almost any weather. In the appendix to my *Two Years' Cruise in the South*—now out of print—I have given full directions to mariners, and I need not recapitulate them here. Suffice it that, whether in the beautiful little Banner Cove at Picton Island (or Victoria Harbour, as I named it), in Wollaston Island, or Wigwam Cove, or some other places to be mentioned, I assert, good shelter and means to recuperate can be found. What more required is, as I have just stated, a small settlement and relief dépôt for the crews of vessels disabled, or meeting with some unusual disaster, such as in some cases lately occurred, and in many other cases now before me.

That a settlement can be formed there without much difficulty is evidenced by the fact of a mission station existing at Ushawai, a spot I passed in 1855, at the head of Ponsonby Sound in the Beagle Channel, though such station can never be the refuge or of the service I point out. It is too far among the inner channels, and not very distant from Woolya, the scene of that fearful massacre by the enraged natives on the crew of the very ship I had previously commanded, and who retaliated upon the white missionaries for taking their children away—the which I had refused doing. Thus Ushawai, though named on Admiralty charts, to the ignoring of more useful places and harbours I had previously brought to Admiralty notice, cannot be available as a relief dépôt or a means of refuge. Still, a settlement can be formed close to, but *easterly* of the Horn itself, at what precise spot I hope to be able some day to indicate with more certainty.

In February 1855 I selected the site, and founded a prosperous settlement at Keppel Island, belonging to the South American Missionary Society; consequently I have little doubt, humanly speaking, I can form an equally good settlement at Cape Horn, if sufficient aid be rendered me. Were it necessary, I could relate several interesting occurrences of solitary ocean islands being profitably settled; but must now confine myself to merely drawing attention to my project, which embraces boats, movable deck-houses, and other means for insuring more safety at sea. One effort I am making is to try and get the official recognition of Great Powers, and, should enough encouragement be given, take out a small vessel that shall serve both as pilot boat, and to carry relief to vessels in distress, having first formed a dépôt of stores and provisions on shore. In reference to this I cannot help longing for at least a portion of the provisions, stores,

clothing, boats, &c., left in useless places at several depôts, by Admiralty orders, in the Arctic regions. Were these deposited in secure, and, to civilised persons, known places about Cape Horn and the Southern Ocean, they would be really useful.

Doubtless there are many noble and generous hearts ready to aid in conferring such a boon upon humanity as the establishing of Ocean Relief Depôts, in the way I have so long proposed, and to these I submit my ideas.

In this paper, however, I have given only an outline of those ideas. Details would occupy too much space at present, but they embody the formation of international, and politically-neutral establishments at suitable places on the great sea routes, particularly Tristan d'Acunha in the South Atlantic, and St Pauls and Amsterdam in the South Indian Ocean, with periodical visits to surrounding localities. At the Atlantic-equatorial St Pauls Rocks, a sort of Ocean Magdala could be formed, with stationary hulks as a training-ship, and a year's depôt of provisions, water, &c., besides the ordinary supply required for those in charge. A Light, a Beacon, Telegraph Wires, Observatory, Post-Office, &c., would make it one of the most advantageous places in the world for scientific purposes, let alone the higher cause of humanity.

[Captain Snow's project of establishing hulks of refuge and for postal communication in *mid-ocean*, is ingenious, but we fear not very practicable, on account of want of soundings and anchorage, to say nothing of risks of safety and cost. His paper, however, is suggestive, and may usefully ventilate the subject. His address is Erith, Kent.—ED.]

## MY HOLIDAY IN JAMAICA.

### CHAPTER V.—A GLORIOUS PANORAMA.

THE rains were now nearly over. Generally, about noon, heavy showers would fall; but the mornings and evenings were fine and deliciously cool. Our communications with the outward world were restored. Road-making in Jamaica is a simple affair. The roads being generally scarped out of the side of a hill, whenever one is carried away by rain or a landslip, it is simply a matter of cutting deeper into the hill. The surface is left to make itself; consequently, it is as soft as a bog or as hard as nails, according as the weather is wet or dry.

For days after the cessation of the rains, evil tidings were coming in. It was not merely that numbers of the poor people had their provision-grounds devastated and their cottages wrecked by the waters; all this admitted of remedy; but in nearly every instance where a cottage was swept away, the owner's savings for years—consisting generally of notes stored up in a bottle or tin box, and hidden in the thatch—were swept away also. Unfortunately, the people had some reason for adopting this foolish practice. Formerly, the only banks in the island were private savings-banks, and to these large sums of money had been intrusted. Shortly before Sir William Grey became Governor, numbers of these banks, at Falmouth, Montego Bay, and other places, failed under the most discreditable circumstances, spread-

ing disaster far and wide. Sir William, during his term of office, established savings-banks guaranteed by government. The measure was a wise and prudent one; but the confidence of the people had been rudely shaken; hence the habit of hoarding up had grown. In some cases, individuals had lost in this way sums varying from twenty to forty pounds.

My visit was now rapidly drawing to close. I was to leave on the 25th; and on my last day we set out, all three, on our final expedition to Catherine's Peak and the Fern-walks. Starting about twelve, we lunched at New-Castle, and then rode on to the Fern-walks. About twenty minutes' ride above New-Castle, we came to a place called the Woodcutter's Gap, from which point the first view of the interior, north of the New-Castle ridge, is obtained. Here the road divides into two branches, both skirting, at different levels, the northern slope of Catherine's Peak, and forming the Upper and Lower Fern-walks. The lower of these roads, after skirting the Peak, turns northward, and is indeed the recognised route between New-Castle and the northern parts of the island. The upper road, running completely round the Peak, returns to the Woodcutter's Gap. Choosing the latter, we rode along it for a short distance; and then, giving our ponies to a black groom we had brought on from New-Castle, a roughish scramble of fifteen minutes brought us to the top of the Peak. At first we seemed destined to a disappointment, as a heavy mist was rolling up from the north, hiding the whole country. Here and there the mist would break, shewing for a few seconds above its fleecy surface some peak clothed with brushwood to its summit; then hiding it again with gauzy folds of vapour. However, we determined as we had time to spare, to wait a while and take our chance. And we had our reward. Scarcely ten minutes had passed, when we could see the tall heads of the tree-ferns in the Fern-walk below us bowing gently, as a light breeze from the north-west came stealing up, scattering the mist before it. Vague forms—blurred outlines of ridge and pinnacle—grew upon our sight as wave after wave of the vapour curtain that had hidden them rolled away before the breeze. A few minutes more, and the vague forms took shape; the blurred outlines became sharply defined; and the whole glorious panorama lay before us, unblotted by a cloud. The spot we were standing on, five thousand and thirty-five feet above the sea, was almost midway between the north and south of the island. Looking due north, we could see the breakers rolling into Buff Bay, nearly five-and-twenty miles away; while to the south-east, Morant Bay and all the adjacent line of coast were clearly visible. New-Castle lay at our feet on one side, the little settlement of Cold-Spring on the other; while on our right hand, nearly due east of where we were standing, towered the huge mass of the Blue Mountain Peak, seven thousand three hundred and thirty-five feet high. All around and below us lay the lesser peaks of the chain, covered to the top with thick underwood, save where landslips or torrents had scored their sides. The breeze had died away; the intense silence seemed intensified by the faint chirp of some species of grasshopper from a neighbouring shrub; and over all hung the speckless dome of the blue tropical sky.

'Have a good look at it,' said Charley, philosophically filling a pipe. 'You're in great luck to get the chance. See! it is changing already.'

Even as he spoke, the air grew colder, and a light tremor shook the tall tree-ferns. Down through each valley came sweeping dense masses of vapour, spreading in every direction. One huge cloud wrapped the Blue Mountain Peak, leaving only its summit visible, like an island in mid-air. A few seconds more and the whole mountain was blotted out. Up from every side rolled the mist, wreathing itself into a thousand fantastic shapes as it came, till in a few minutes we found ourselves on an island in a sea of cloud; earth and sky, everything invisible, except a few yards round the spot on which we were standing.

Scrambling down the rough path, we regained our ponies and rode round the Peak by the Upper Fern-walk. Unfortunately, I am densely ignorant on the subject of ferns; but still I was struck by the extraordinary beauty and luxuriance of those that clustered on every side of us as we rode on. Especially marvellous were the tree-ferns. In many cases, the twisted stems, perfectly bare, sprang up to a height of forty or fifty feet, and then spread out into magnificent canopies of branches some ten or fifteen feet in diameter. At each stage of the tree-fern's growth, a fresh canopy of branches bursts out around the top, and the one beneath withers and dies. The twisted or plaited appearance of the stems arises from the marks which each successive ring of branches leaves as it withers and falls off, when a fresh one comes out above.

It was now getting on in the afternoon; so, as we were engaged to dine at Ropley, we bade adieu to the Fern-walk, and turned homeward. There being no moon, it was excessively dark as we made our way over to Ropley at half-past seven. The Major and I walked; and Mrs Edgeware, with a gray skirt over her evening dress, preceded us on a pony. The boy in front carried a lantern. As we passed the turn to Strawberry Hill, we met the Judge in evening clothes, also carrying a lantern, and without a hat.

'Hat!' said the Judge, on my making some remark on the absence of his headgear. 'Hat! I never wear a hat at night. I wouldn't wear one by day, only the little boys would hoot me, and bring the bench into contempt. I maintain,' he continued, tramping along with vigorous strides, while the lantern flashed on his capacious white waistcoat and gold spectacles—'I maintain, sir, this is the finest climate in the world. There are no extremes. Look at our friends the Major and Mrs Edgeware! Are they ever ill? Look at their children! My boy grew up here, and never had a day's illness till I sent him to England, and there he got scarlatina! It is an English climate, without the English fogs and rains and east winds!'

And the Judge, whose vigorous frame and hale complexion shewed that a residence of nearly twenty years in Jamaica had not done him much harm, hurried forward to light Mrs Edgeware in through the gate of Ropley.

#### CHAPTER VI.—JAMAICA PAST—JAMAICA FUTURE.

The Dean and Mrs—; a Mr S—, an extensive pen-keeper (a person who breeds and sells stock) from the north side; a young lady who was

staying in the house; the Judge, Charley, and Mrs Edgeware and myself, made up the party. Some excellent clear turtle ushered in one of those cosy, pleasant, chatty dinners for which Ropley is famous in Jamaica, and which many an old Jamaican, if this happens to meet his eye, will recall with kindly remembrance. As usual in the hills, we dined practically in the open air, as all the venetians front and back, were wide open, and the cool evening air came straying in unchecked. I confess to being a sensualist in a small way, and to like a good dinner much; and to like it still more when its surroundings are pretty and bright. When I hear a man declaiming against the pleasures of the table, and boasting that it is a matter of indifference to him what he eats, I set that man down as an ass. A man might as well, in my mind, boast that he was insensible to the perfume of a rose. A good dinner elevates the moral tone. Under its benign influence, we glow with charity towards all mankind. We pronounce A.'s novel pleasant. We can see no harm in Mrs B.'s little flirtation with Gussy C., that most lamb-like of Lovelaces. We fancy—we wouldn't really, you know—but we fancy we would lend money to that poor fellow D., who has gone such an awful smasher.

On the other hand, under the influence of one of those dreadful meals which English middle-class society inflicts on its victims, what are our feelings? what our language? A.'s novel is balderdash; Mrs B. is a forward hussy, no better than she should be; and as for that rascal D., imprisonment for life is what he deserves. What London man is there who does not recall with a shudder those appalling banquets? We groan when we get the invitation. With gloomy irony, we write back that we accept it 'with much pleasure.' On the fatal day, we pack ourselves into a cab and drive off. We are received in the hall by Swipes, the greengrocer round the corner. In a confidential undertone, he inquires our name. He knows it perfectly, the old humbug; but it is part of his rôle as interim butler to pretend he does not. In point of fact, it was only a fortnight ago that he attended at our own little dinner, carrying off after that entertainment a cold fowl in his umbrella. We can see it—the umbrella, I mean—bulging in the corner behind the hat-stand. From the soup to the salmon—a bit of the soft side with long bones, like knitting-needles, sticking out of it, is what we always get; from the salmon, through the leathery cutlets and dubious patties, and on to the lukewarm mutton; from thence to the moment when a morsel of perspiring ice-pudding is dashed on our plate, preparatory to the introduction—by Swipes—of that rich old Château Margaux at forty shillings. Every detail of those dreadful dinners is familiar to us, their heat, discomfort, and general misery.

Here, on the contrary, everything was cool and fresh and pleasant. Gorgeous masses of roses, pink, yellow, and red, bordered by slender ferns or delicate lace-plant, bloomed amid the silver and glass on the table, and filled the room with their fragrance. Instead of that abominable Swipes and his greasy satellites, two smart young negroes, in white jackets and trousers, waited on us. Swift, noiseless, and attentive, they seemed all eyes and hands. Did you look round for the anchovy sauce? There was Joey at your elbow

with it. Were you thirsty? Sam had your favourite beverage, iced to a nicety, ready in a twinkling.

Meantime, the talk flowed on. Mrs Edgeware and Miss — were deeply interested about the marriage of a naval officer with a Jamaica belle, which was soon coming off, and at which the young lady was to assist as bride's-maid; also about a ball, to be given by the officers of the guard-ship. Mr S — and the Judge were discussing the prospects of sugar and some Jamaican question of land-reform; while our hostess, Edgeware, and myself were gossiping about the natives and their habits.

'It is a great point with them to imitate the whites,' Mrs — said, when we were sitting over our coffee; 'and sometimes the effect is rather absurd. For instance, a friend of ours, Mrs M —, made her housemaid a present of cast-off riding habit and tall hat; and next Sunday the girl made her appearance in church with the tall hat stuck on the top of a red turban. It was too much for my husband's gravity; and he made me tell her that in England a hat and turban were never worn together.'

After coffee, we adjourned to the veranda, where we were permitted to smoke, while Miss — discoursed sweet music inside. Mr S — and I got into conversation as we leaned over the veranda railing, smoking our cigars, and looking out over the starlit bay.

'I won't imitate our American neighbours,' he said, laughing, 'and ask you what you think of the country.'

'Thank you much,' I replied. 'In fact, I am quite puzzled; and would be only too glad to hear from you who have lived here so long, how the colony is getting on. Is it getting on at all?'

He laughed, and shrugged his shoulders. 'Don't call me a pessimist,' he said, 'but really, I can't say it is.'

'Retrograding?' I inquired.

'Well,' he replied, 'it depends on what you call retrogression.'

'Because,' said I, 'the ordinary British idea of a West India colony is a place where planters of enormous wealth live surrounded by happy negroes, perpetually dancing and singing when they are not working.'

'My dear sir,' said Mr S —, 'the ideal planter is as extinct as the dodo. I know the island pretty well, having lived here upwards of forty years; and with the exception of — he mentioned two or three names — there are not a dozen sugar-planters in solvent circumstances on the island. The sugar industry, the staple of the island, is simply a thing of the past. I am sorry to say it, but it's true.'

'Indeed,' I replied. 'I thought the labour question, which I suppose is the great question' ('Only one of them,' said Mr S —), 'had been solved by the coolie importation.'

Mr S — laughed. 'You'll find plenty of people to say so,' he said; 'and perhaps they believe it. My answer is a very practical and prosaic one. If you were to come over on a visit to me to Trelawney, I'd shew you, in a morning's ride, districts extending for twenty or thirty miles, which were formerly valuable sugar estates, all abandoned by their owners.'

'Left absolutely derelict, do you mean?' I asked.

'Absolutely derelict,' he replied; 'and the same process is going on. Day by day, estate after estate is being abandoned, as not worth keeping.'

'And what becomes of the land?' I inquired.

'In some cases, it is squatted on; in others, it goes to bush; and in many cases the government is taking it up, and selling it out to the people at four or five pounds an acre. Indeed,' continued Mr S —, 'this abandoning of estates by their owners has been attended by most disastrous consequences to the poor people.'

'How is that?' I asked.

'Well,' he replied, 'it happens this way. After an estate is abandoned, somebody assuming to be owner or attorney [land-agent] of the property, takes it, breaks it up into lots, and sells it to the poor people, putting the money in his pocket. Then, fifteen or sixteen years afterwards, the owner, or some purchaser from him, hearing the land has become worth something, comes back, and ejects all the people who have bought. But our friend the Judge can tell you more about this than I can.'

'I can,' said the Judge. 'What Mr S — has told you is perfectly true as to the scandals and hardships of the present state of affairs. And the reason of it is this, that the law regulating questions as to the possession of land in this island is three centuries old. This law—I'll avoid technicals, to spare our fair friends—but this law, in force here at the present moment, would in some cases allow an owner to stay away beyond seas for any time less than sixty years; and then, when he did come back, give him ten more years to bring his action of ejectment. In order to confer a prescriptive right in Jamaica, it is necessary to have had unchallenged possession of a piece of land for twenty years, and this possession must be what lawyers call "adverse."

'That's a technical, I'm sure,' cried Mrs Edgeware.

'Come, come!' said the Judge, laughing. 'You are right, Mrs Edgeware; it is a technical, and a disastrous one for Jamaica peasants who become purchasers of land. It is enough to say, that under its operation, a man might formerly buy land, pay his money for it, remain twenty-five or thirty years in possession, and then be turned out by the absentee owner. It is needless to say that the common-sense of the British legislature has swept away the legislative cobweb.'

'You see,' resumed Mr S —, 'it was the sugar industry that was the foundation of the island's wealth. The collapse of that, consequent on emancipation; the abolition of protection; the production of beetroot sugar, and other things, have brought about the collapse of everything else. We have no manufactures—no trade, except a small trade in cattle and fruit; there is no immigration—no influx of capital, and no prospect of either.'

'A while ago,' I remarked, 'when I asked you was the island retrograding, you said it depended on what I called retrogression. Now the picture you paint seems very like what I call retrogression.'

'Still,' said Mr S —, smiling, 'we are progressing towards peasant-proprietorship, which a great many people think a very desirable state of things.'

'The fact is,' said the Judge, 'John Bull is taking a pull at his purse-strings. The sums of money spent in the island in former days were enormous. We had a Bishop, four Archdeacons, and a numerous clergy, paid by the state. We had a General commanding, a huge staff, and innumerable functionaries. All that is a thing of the past. We are dropping to our proper level accordingly.'

'The question is, what our proper level will be, and when we will reach it,' said Mr S—. 'It's a dangerous thing attempting to prophesy; but—given an island without trade, manufactures, or capital—with the white race decreasing and the black increasing—with no upper classes except a knot of salaried officials—lastly, with an immense extent of land in the hands of government, ready to be sold to the negroes at five pounds an acre—it's not difficult to guess what we are drifting to.'

'What?' I asked.

'Simply,' replied Mr S—, 'to the original state of the island before a white face was seen here. The island from end to end will be covered with a multitude of peasant proprietors, each cultivating his one or two acres. Emigration and climatic causes will thin out the few thousand whites in the country, and none will come here to replace them. It will be one of the quietest, most orderly, and most standstill communities on earth. When the last white is gone, and the last acre bought by a negro, why then'— Mr S— paused.

'What then?' said I.

'Why then,' said Mr S—, laughing, 'John Bull will begin to consider whether it is worth his while to keep up an army of officials, and to spend thousands of pounds in keeping troops at New-Castle to watch Quashee planting yams.'

'And then,' said the Judge, rising, 'John Bull will pension off liberally that "knot of salaried officials" you mentioned, Mr S—. And you and I, Dean, will learn whist, and betake ourselves to Bath or Cheltenham to end our days.—Good-night, good folks all. Good-night, Mr O. I am sorry you're leaving us. Let them know at home that we're not quite savages up here in our hills,' and the Judge departed.

#### CHAPTER VII.—FINAL REFLECTIONS—HOMeward BOUND.

I lay awake for a long time that night, thinking over what Mr S— had said. It only confirmed what I had heard before from various sources during my stay in Jamaica. All the evidence shewed me that any scheme of white immigration was out of the question. In several parts, and those the healthiest parts of the island, it had been tried, and failed. While the white man going to Jamaica, may with reasonable precautions preserve his health, there is a steady deterioration in his descendants. Nobody who has lived in the island can fail to notice the languor and listlessness and want of physique apparent in the Creoles even of the purest white blood. If, then, this white race were to die out, was there any chance of the blacks bettering their position? All that I had heard or seen led me to the conclusion there was none. I know no instance of any, even the smallest rum-shop, being owned by a black. They seem totally

devoid of the mercantile instinct. Go into any of the Kingston stores. The clerks behind the counters and at the desks are sometimes white, nearly always coloured, but never black. On the other hand, the heavier menial work is always done by blacks. There is nothing to prevent their rising in the world apparently. A good education is within the reach of all, and money in comparatively large sums they can and do save. Two generations almost have grown up since emancipation, so that its degrading associations have had time to pass away. Yet the Jamaica negro does nothing. Living on next to nothing—a negro can live easily on a couple of shillings a week—he saves and saves till he buys an acre of provision-ground. If he has a grown-up family, he saves and saves till he can buy another acre, on which he plants a son or daughter. The same process goes on repeating itself *ad infinitum*; but I never heard of any instance of a negro attempting anything more than this. The younger men having acquired this provision-ground, spend all their money on clothes.

It must be said in their favour that they are a quiet, orderly, sober race; I never, during several months' stay in Jamaica, saw a drunken negro. They are religious too; and their religious tendencies are sometimes a nuisance, inasmuch as a favourite spiritual exercise of theirs is to assemble together and keep roaring Messrs Moody and Sankey's hymns all night. But as to ideas of progress, they have none. Yet in some respects they are intelligent enough. Especially they have considerable dramatic powers. I saw a lot of urchins in the school near Craigton act some dramatic scenes with extraordinary spirit. On another occasion, Charley Edgeware's servants extemporised a theatre out of a half-ruined out-house, and played the opening scenes of the first part of *Henry IV*. They had posters stuck up on the trees about, and actually got tickets printed. We all went up for half an hour; and really, considering the difficulties they laboured under, the affair was a great success. The wild Prince was arrayed in red and white striped knickerbockers, an old scarlet tunic, and a French *képi* stuck on the back of his woolly head. But it was darkly hinted to me that they had not the faintest glimmering idea what the speeches meant which they recited so glibly. Their teachers will tell you that up to the age of thirteen or fourteen, they manifest very great quickness of apprehension; but after that, their mental growth seems to stop. They are as imitative as monkeys, and as vain as peacocks. They imitate the English in every way. A negro wedding is a sight to see. I am afraid, by the way, that it is the opportunity for display that it affords, rather than any regard for the sanctity of the tie, that induces them to marry at all. They have a regular swell breakfast, all sorts of joints, sweets, wine, fruit, &c. The funny part of this is, that the ordinary Jamaica negro rather dislikes meat, preferring a mess of split-peas, rice, and salt-fish. But as the whites have meat, so must they. Their dresses on such occasions, the women's especially, are sometimes irresistibly ludicrous, from the extraordinary jumble of colours and materials composing them. I saw the Major's cook going to a wedding. He had a black frock-coat, white waistcoat, patent boots, and an enormous bouquet. Over the waistcoat hung a

huge eyeglass, through which, I need hardly say, he could not see. So that all the difference apparently, between the negro of the past and the present is, that the latter can read and wears clothes. Having come to which conclusion, I fell asleep.

All my luggage being sent on early, I started down hill with Charley's groom next morning at half-past six, having bid farewell—a long one I am afraid—to my kind host and hostess. For the last time I crawled down the rough bridle-paths, dismissing the groom at the bottom of the hill with a gratuity which will enable him to buy the most splendid waistcoat in Kingston. For the last time I bumped over the uneven road, and reached Kingston about an hour before the *Moselle*—for it was she—was to start. I had secured my berth beforehand, and Allen was there to welcome me to my old place. Shortly, the hawsers were cast off and the great screw began to throb, and I was on my way home again. As we passed Port-Royal, a voice from behind accosted me. 'Stranger,' it said, 'I reckon Jamaiker is a one-horse consarn.'

It was an American gentleman who made the observation, and—I am afraid I agreed with him.

#### CHRISTOPHER CORDUROY.

JOHN BALLANTYNE—one of the Ballantynes with whose affairs Sir Walter Scott was unfortunately mixed up—started a weekly periodical, under the name of 'The Saleroom,' in January 1817, which went only the length of twenty-eight numbers. The paper, says Lockhart, had slender success. It was, in fact, 'a dull and hopeless concern, though Scott wrote several things in it.' Mr James Stillie, a noted dealer in old books in Edinburgh, who, remembering the Scott-Ballantyne days, revives the recollection of the defunct periodical by discovering and copying into his catalogue one of Scott's forgotten contributions, entitled 'The Aspirations of Christopher Corduroy.' It is a gentle *jeu d'esprit*, worth recovering from oblivion, and we give it as follows.

'My uncle is the elder brother of my late father. My grandfather was a very respectable tailor in this town, and gave his sons a good education, by means of which they both met with considerable success in life. My uncle in particular arrived some years ago at the dignity of the magistracy, and has bought several substantial tenements in this neighbourhood, which have, in the main, turned out very good purchases. But all his education, as you will shortly perceive, has not been sufficient to hinder him from falling into one of the strangest delusions that ever entered into a man's head. It is now about six years since I left this country, being obliged to spend some time in the West Indies in the way of my business, so that it is only of late that, on my return home, I have been fully informed as to my uncle's real case. From all that I can hear, very shortly after I left Scotland he had, somehow or other, fallen in with a book called *Nisbet's Heraldry*; and the first strange symptom that appeared was the wonderful affection he soon began to entertain for this author, entirely giving up all other reading, and sitting in his back-shop studying coats of arms and crests, when he should have been attending to customers or balancing his accounts. This was

remarked by a neighbour of his, a hatter, from the Highlands, who, it seems, is the proper chief of his clan, although his great-grandfather was cheated out of his birthright by the management of his great-great-grandfather's second wife, who managed to get the estate settled on her own children, the marriage of his own great-great-grandmother, who was cook in the family, having been kept secret, and all the witnesses being dead.

'My uncle was at first contented with being a patient listener to all the puffing stories of this Highlander, whom he considered as one of the most nobly descended men in the world. But by degrees he began to lay claims to gentility for himself; and being, by the hatter's interest, admitted into a club of respectable tradesmen, who call themselves the Genealogical Society, and spend most of their evenings in adjusting questions of pedigree among themselves, he there got acquainted with a celebrated antiquarian, by name Moses McCrae, a glover, who suggested to him an idea which has given a new colour to his existence ever since. Our family name of Corduroy had, as I always supposed, been bestowed on some of our forefathers on account of their being instrumental in introducing the use of that particular kind of stuff in the neighbourhood; but Mr McCrae hinted that the name ought, in his opinion, to be written *Cœur du roy*, and that, in all probability, my uncle was the male representative of some ancient branch of the house of Douglas, as *Cœur du roy* means a king's heart, and the Douglases wear a heart with a king's crown on it in their arms; instancing the clan of the Macgregors, who had all been obliged to change their names for the best part of a century. Mr McCrae at the same time advised my uncle to employ an acquaintance of his in the Register Office in Edinburgh, to search all the old records for proofs of this connection between the Corduroys and the Douglases. I have never heard that his fees to the Register Office produced anything very satisfactory; but by dint of constant talking about this matter over his punch with the hatter and Mr McCrae, what at first appeared barely possible, began every evening to gain in his eyes a new degree of probability, till at length the delusion has gone to such an extremity, that he now no more doubts of it than he does of his own existence.

'The first hint that I had of all this was his giving up wafers and the old signet stamp with the initials of Corduroy & Co., and beginning to seal his letters with a crowned heart and the motto, *Tandem triumphans* on the top of it; which the first two or three times I took little notice of, thinking he had borrowed some gentleman's seal who was accidentally in the shop to have his measure taken; but at last I understood what had occurred from another quarter. There were several expressions in his letters about the same time which I could not well understand. In one letter he told me, that "whatever the world might say, he had no doubt he should live to see the day when nobody would venture to question the respectability of his house." I was afraid something had happened; but meeting with a friend newly from Scotland, he assured me he had never heard the firm called in question. He lost his only son shortly after, and wrote me: "I now look to my nephew to carry on our line." Now, I had been

bred to another trade, and knew nothing about being a tailor, so I thought the good man had his intellects affected by his affliction. But I now understand that by *his house* he meant the race of the Corduroys, and that by my *carrying on the line*, he only expresses his wish that I may not be the last of them.

'This frenzy, for I can give it no other name, grew every day more alarming. He began to brag to all his acquaintance what a great family he was come of, and could scarcely take a customer's measure for a pair of breeches without entertaining him with some old-fashioned stories about the good Sir James Douglas and Archibald Bell-the-Cat. He looked down on all his neighbours, although they were come of as respectable burgesses of the town as himself. He left the Antiburghers too, where his father and he had always been elders, and took a pew in the Episcopal Chapel, because he had a notion Episcopacy was the genteeler religion. In short, he became as proud as a peacock; and when he was made a bailie, one would have thought, as his friends tell me, he scarcely knew which hip to sit on. He had his arms taken out regularly in the heralds' book, which cost him the matter of ten pounds, and he had them painted and glazed, and hung up in his back-shop and his parlour. He made his daughters cut out fire-screens in the shape of hearts; and made his wife a present of a tea-chest which resembles a heart below, and has a crown for the lid. His common reading has long been either in Mr Nisbet before mentioned, or in some old papers from the Session-clerk's office, which he has great difficulty in deciphering; but if he can only meet with the death or marriage of a Corduroy or a Douglas, that is quite enough to make up for weeks of trouble. He once gave a dinner, I am informed, to a large party of friends, on hearing it mentioned by a lawyer on a circuit that three Corduroys were hanged at Jedburgh for *stouthieff* and *sorning*—which I believe means, after all, only robbery and sturdy begging—in the year 1500. He is always in this way making what he calls *family discoveries*, though I believe this of the three thieves is the greatest. He has got a large book like a ledger, bound in red leather, with brass clasps, where he has copied the first leaf of his father's Bible, and anything he has picked up about people of his name, and this he calls *his history*. He keeps this book and a few old papers, such as his grandmother's marriage-lines and the like, in an old trunk, which he has built into the wall, and this he calls *his charter-chest*. Before he took to these fancies, he had built a very snug cottage about two miles from the town; but he has since that time had all the windows taken out, and new ones put in, with panes of glass cut in the shape of diamonds, as if it were a church, not forgetting paintings of red hearts and royal crowns, of which there are at least a dozen, including the skylights. His fireplaces are also made with a pointed arch at the top; and his fenders have battlements on them like the top of a castle. His parlour is stuck full of pictures of old gentlemen in wigs and coats of mail, and young ladies very indecent about the bosom, whom he calls his ancestors; but his apprentice told me he had himself heard him bidding for some of them at an auction. When he shews his visitors the real portrait which he has of his father, he always

remarks that he was a wonderfully modest man, and *never spoke of his family*; "but," adds he, "he had no taste for research."

'The whole neighbourhood consider him as one out of his mind on this head, and call him Count Corduroy, by way of derision; and I am much afraid that, if I stay much longer among them, they will christen me the Young Count. What makes me write you at present, is more particularly this, that I hear him talking about getting his *lands*, as he calls them—although he has not above twenty acres altogether, including Craig-Corduroy Cottage—erected into a barony. I have also heard him hinting that supporters would not stand him above a hundred pounds. If he goes on at this rate, I do not see how anybody will employ him, as every one already says he has got a bee in his bonnet, and might easily be cognosced. I am in the hopes that this letter may put an end to his delusion, which will be a great obligation on CHRISTOPHER CORDUROY, Jun.'

#### THE MYSTERIOUS HOUSE.

##### IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

UNLIKE her usual practice, Mrs Weevil did not return to the house that day till far on in the afternoon; and after she had entered her rooms, I could hear her bustling about with an activity and noise quite unprecedented in my experience of her habits. This rather alarmed me. I was afraid she had suspected, from the appearance of her rooms, notwithstanding our care in removing all traces of our presence, that some one had been there in her absence; and this might be sufficient to defeat my hopes of bringing to light the trickery that had been so long and so systematically practised. But I was still more astonished when, about an hour after her return, she sent a message to me by the ayah that she wished to speak with me, if I would grant her an interview. At first, I scarcely knew what answer to make. Were I to refuse to see her, this might complete the suspicion which she perhaps entertained; and if I did see her, I was afraid that I might by some word or look betray the knowledge of which I had become possessed. I thought upon the whole I had better see her, and answered accordingly.

As she entered the room with a basket over her arm, she dropped a courtesy; and from the flow of words with which she at once opened the conversation, she seemed to put on a frankness of manner which I had not before observed in any slight intercourse I had had with her.

"Yes, ma'am," she went on, "I were just a-comin', ma'am, to say as I would be goin' from the 'ouse for a few days; my son, as is steward to Lord B—, being took very badly last night, ma'am; and as he have no one to wait upon him, it holds as I, ma'am, as his mother, must do my dooty—yes, ma'am."

All this she said without once stopping to take breath; and I could not help observing that she was slightly flurried in my presence, and seemed

to keep talking as much to hide her uneasiness as to enlighten me regarding her errand. I said I was very sorry to hear that her son was ill, and that it was very proper she should, in the circumstances, attend to him. 'But,' I asked, 'has he no servant in the house?'

'Not presently, ma'am,' she answered; 'leastways, the 'ousemaid have gone away over to Brookford for a few days to see her mother, who stays there, ma'am—yes, ma'am;' and she courtesied again in the excess of her civility.

After I had dismissed her, I did not know what to think. This was an interference with my plans on which I had not counted. I had no one to advise with me, and felt much perplexed. As evening approached, and the gloom of twilight, I had a strange nervous feeling, such as I had only once before experienced, and that was in India, during the terrible days when the Mutiny was at its height, and every footfall made us start, as if next moment were to be our last. As the dusk deepened, my anxiety increased; and when at length the ayah conducted the joiner, as I had before instructed her, to my room, I was almost too overpowered to speak. Andrew and the blacksmith were for the time detained in the kitchen, as I wished to talk the matter over with the joiner, as the most intelligent of the three.

As he entered my room, I was surprised to find a second person behind him, whom he introduced to me as Mr Burrowes, the district inspector of police, who had been on an official visit to the village that day, and who, when he heard the story, volunteered his services in place of the constable. His presence at once gave me great relief; and this was enhanced when I found he had had long experience in the London detective force, and was entering with the enthusiasm of his profession into our plans. He had heard already from the joiner what had passed that day; complimented me highly on the presence of mind I had displayed on the previous evening, and expressed his acquiescence in everything that we had since done.

When, however, I mentioned to him my unexpected interview that afternoon with Mrs Weevil, and that she had left the house, he was a good deal taken aback. He questioned me closely as to her manner and appearance when she was in my room, and as to whether she seemed much affected by her son's illness. I answered his several questions to the best of my ability; and he, after thinking awhile, pacing up and down the room, turned to me and said:

'Let everything be carried out as you formerly proposed. See that your family retire to rest at their usual time, and with as little appearance as possible of anything unusual going on. If the woman has taken alarm, nothing will be lost by waiting till to-morrow, when her rooms can be more carefully examined by daylight. In the first place, will you shew me the bedroom in which you were disturbed last night?'

I conducted him thither, the joiner following; and after he had ascertained where, to use his own expression, I had first seen the 'party,' and where and how the party had disappeared, he at once intimated his plans. He said I was to retire to my room as usual, seat myself in my chair by the fire as on the previous evening, and either sleep or appear to sleep, as was most agreeable to myself. Beyond the window stood a large wardrobe, in which, after the house was all quiet, he and the joiner would conceal themselves; the blacksmith and the gardener being set as a guard upon the door of the housekeeper's room below. The village constable, he had arranged, would keep watch on the outside of the house, but so as not to be readily discovered.

The duties of the household, in the absence of my servants, fell somewhat heavily on the ayah and myself; and the time passed quickly for me as I bustled about, seeing the children put to bed; after which the ayah also retired. During all this time, everything had been carried on in our customary way. Mr Burrowes and the rest of his helpers betook themselves for the time to a distant apartment up-stairs, and the house had resounded all the evening with the mingled sounds of laughter and noise inseparable from a large family of children such as ours. But now all was silent; the men had slipped quietly to their different posts; Mr Burrowes and the joiner were, I knew, in the wardrobe at the other end of my bedroom; and I was seated in my lounging-chair, as on the previous evening.

As I sat in this position thinking, I could not help observing to myself how near we were all making ourselves ridiculous. The old woman whom I had suspected, was out of the house; no one else but the ordinary members of the household and the watchers, could possibly be in it; and here was I, sitting at my bedroom fire, making-believe to sleep, with two men concealed in the wardrobe, all hoping to catch—we did not know what. The humour of the situation so strongly affected me at one time, that I could scarcely refrain from bursting into laughter. But the thought of Mr Burrowes having put himself to so much trouble on my account, combined with a remembrance of what I had experienced during the past twenty-four hours, gradually sobered my feelings; and I shortly found my thoughts floating away in dim remembrances to my life in India; to my distant husband; to our long separation; to the terrible nights and days of that fearful Mutiny, whose horrors still rose up before me; to—

There was a thud on the floor, and I started. I had been asleep, and in my slumber had knocked a book off the small table at my elbow. The fire was burning low, and I rose in a confused state to trim it, when my eyes fell upon what I had seen on the previous evening. In the imperfect light, it seemed taller and more ghastly-looking than before, and was approaching me from behind. As my eyes fell upon it, I gave a loud shriek, and caught hold of the chair to support me. As I did so, I saw the figure gradually recede from me, and the room seemed to grow suddenly darker. I am certain that, left to myself, I should at that moment have fainted right

away, for the whole thing had been so sudden, and found me so unprepared, that in my confusion I forgot all about the business of the night. But just as the white figure seemed to be approaching the curtained windows, I saw two dark figures dash quickly upon it from behind, then a sharp and violent struggle, in which all three rolled on the floor, as if locked together in a deadly embrace. The white figure had managed to wrench one arm loose, and in another moment there was the sharp click of a pistol. Thanks to our forethought, the weapon was harmless. By this time the noise of the struggle that was going on had brought the blacksmith and Andrew up to my apartment; and with their help, the white figure was in a few seconds manacled and led forward to the light, his white garment—an old surplice—hanging in tatters about him. He was at once known to the majority of the company—it was the steward! He turned his back on me with a stifled oath.

Leaving him, now helpless, with his hands fast behind his back, in charge of the blacksmith, Mr Burrowes led the way to the housekeeper's rooms below, the door of which was found to be locked. It was at once burst open, and taking a candle with us, we entered. The outer room was in the same condition as I had seen it during the day; but the inner room shewed the bed drawn forward, and the panelling of the recess which we had discovered, standing open. Nobody was there. Taking the candle forward, to examine the recess, Mr Burrowes found that the box had a movable bottom, in addition to that which we had discovered, and that by its removal an opening sufficient for one person at a time led down a trap-stair into the cellars below. Mr Burrowes and the joiner at once descended, taking the light with them, the rest of us waiting as directed in the outer apartment, or watching the lobbies that led to it. In a few minutes I heard sudden footsteps in my bedroom, and rushing thither, found that Mr Burrowes and the joiner had reached it from the cellars, into which the trap-door led, the whole of the woodwork of one side of the window of my room being ingeniously made to move back upon hinges like a door, yet so constructed that it could not be opened by any one in the room. When the steward was searched, there was found on him besides the pistols, a bunch of duplicate keys, which could open any chamber, or other lockfast place, in the house.

The constable having been called in from the garden, the steward, who had hitherto stood silent and sullen, with a dark expression of malice and revenge upon his face, was handed over to him, and he was instructed by his superior to convey him to the local police-office and place him in a cell. The blacksmith he ordered to accompany the constable, and see that the prisoner did not effect an escape.

Meantime, the gardener, who, since the 'ghost' had been discovered to be but flesh and blood like himself, had become as bold as a lion, volunteered to stay in the house with us all night and help me to soothe the fears of my poor terrified children; while Mr Burrowes, accompanied by the joiner, proceeded to the house of the steward. I need not burden the reader with details; but I may mention that in answer to a quiet tap at the

window, the door of the house was immediately opened, and old Mrs Weevil was at once in the grip of the officer. She was absolutely thunderstruck, and quite lost her presence of mind. Without telling her anything of what had happened, Mr Burrowes asked for her son, the steward. At first, she hesitated, then said he was ill in bed.

'No,' said Mr Burrowes; 'he is not in bed, but he is safe enough by this time in the police-office; so you had better just tell us all about it.'

At this, Mrs Weevil entirely broke down, and confessed all. It is unnecessary to repeat at length what the reader can guess in great measure for himself; but the sum of her story was this. The mother, equally with her son, hated Miss Roupel for despising his addresses, and took the means we have seen in order to drive each successive tenant out of her house. She also admitted that after the sudden death of Mrs Roupel, it was they who had spread the stories charging foul-play against the daughter. In answer to a question from Mr Burrowes, she confessed that it was she who had played the ghost on the previous evening; but she had never before shewn herself to any one who did not at once flee and quit the house. My attempt to get hold of her, therefore, had so alarmed her that she had great difficulty in escaping; and next morning had gone to her son, and told him she durst not play the part of ghost any longer, as the present tenant was likely to stand her ground, and they would in that way be found out. They were both enraged at thus being at last baffled in their long-cherished course of malicious practices against Miss Roupel; and her son determined to take out his revenge upon me that night by first frightening me and then robbing the house, after which they were resolved to take the first opportunity of quitting that part of the country. Their cupidity had been aroused by the sight of some trinkets in Indian jewellery which I possessed; hence the design to rob me. In order to cover their purpose, the old hag was sent to me with the story of her son being ill; and as he had a secret means of access to the house, he readily effected an entrance after he supposed the family asleep. It was her son who had first put her upon these evil practices—had brought the old surplice from Lord B——'s house, in which either of them, as occasion offered, was in the habit of terrifying the inmates, and thus depriving the innocent object of their hatred of her chief means of livelihood.

Mr Burrowes did not trouble to apprehend the old woman at that time; but he took care that she should not leave the country till after the trial of her son for housebreaking and felony, when she had to appear against him as a witness. He was found guilty, and sent to a penal settlement. Mrs Weevil, ashamed to shew face in the neighbourhood, departed no one knew whither.

As for the ghost-story, as soon as its salient points were known in the neighbourhood, the house not only lost its bad character, but I became for the time quite a kind of heroine, everybody praising my courage and sagacity. I had the pleasure, some weeks later, of entertaining in the house Mrs Richard Egerton, the former Miss Roupel, whom the neighbourhood, conscious of unjust condemnation, received with open arms.

After the term of my tenancy expired, the charming house let for a more suitable rent; and ever since, I believe it has formed an adequate source of income to its worthy owners.

## REMARKABLE REMEDIES.

MAN is a physic-taking animal. Her Majesty's lieges alone dispose of a prodigious but unknown quantity, in obedience to the orders of orthodox practitioners; while their annual consumption of patent medicines is at the rate of half a box or bottle for every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom, at an expenditure of something very much more than a million pounds.

There are, however, plenty of real and fancied invalids who have no faith in the apothecary's wares. Some believe in hydropathy, of which Lamb wittily said: 'It is neither new nor wonderful; for it is as old as the Deluge, which killed more than it cured.' Others are of Burke's opinion, that hot water is a specific for every bodily ill; while others, again, loudly vaunt the triumphs of the hunger-cure, so called because the patient has to subsist upon two or three ounces of white bread and one wine-glass of water every twenty-four hours, so long as he remains uncured.

The hunger-cure is after all only a dangerous extension of Dr Rutty's prescription of a dinner of bread-and-water, as a sovereign remedy for indigestion. Dr Johnson's prescription for the same ailment was a pleasanter one. Learning that Miss Boothby was troubled that way, he wrote to his 'dear angel': 'Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy and, I think, a very probable remedy for indigestion and stomach complaints. Take an ounce of dried orange-peel finely powdered; divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time. The best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red port; or to eat it first, and drink the wine afterwards. Do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a day, will be sufficient to begin; or less, if you find any aversion.' The remedy certainly is a simple one, and worthy a trial, being, as its proponent says, 'not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and if not found useful, easily left off.'

At an inquest held at Bradwell, Bucks, on the body of a five-year-old girl who died of hydrophobia, one of the witnesses deposed that two days after the child had been bitten, the buried dog was disinterred, its liver extracted, and a piece of it, weighing about an ounce and a half, frizzled on a fork before the fire until it was dried up, and then given to the child, who ate it freely; but nevertheless died.—A Chinaman, charged before a New York magistrate with stealing a duck in a stage of decomposition, explained that he took the bird for medicinal purposes. 'You savey,' said he, 'one duck, hal lotten; takee, boilee him; lub mattah on leg; him all light; cue plulicy.'—Not an overnice remedy for pleurisy, but hardly nastier than magpie-dust, which no less a personage than the Princess Bismarck apparently deems an infallible specific for epilepsy; since, no longer ago than January last, the President of the Eckenfoerder Shooting Club addressed the following circular to the members of that association: 'Her Highness Princess Bismarck wishes to receive, before the 18th inst, as many magpies as possible,

from the burned remains of which an anti-epileptic powder may be manipulated. I permit myself, therefore, High and Well-born Sir, to entreat that you will forthwith shoot as many magpies as you can in your preserves, and forward the same to the Chief Forester Lange, at Friedrichruhe or hither, without paying for their carriage, down to the 18th of this month.'

The winter of 1876-7 was exceptionally severe in Detroit, and marked, moreover, by a visitation of smallpox, proving especially virulent in the Polish quarter of the city, the denizens of which were obstinate anti-vaccinationists, whose only method of keeping the scourge at bay was to close their doors against all comers. About Christmas-time, a young Pole, fresh from Europe, found his way to Detroit, and naturally made for the quarter wherein dwelt his compatriots. One of them gave him friendly greeting, but had no sooner done so, than seeing unmistakable signs of the dreaded disease on the stranger's face, he hustled him into the street without any ceremony. Friendless and penniless, the poor fellow struck out at a venture for a place of refuge; and reaching a barnyard, made his bed on some straw at the end of a shed. There he lay sick and starving for three nights and two days, tormented by the itching of the pustules, until in desperation he plastered face, neck, and hands with the fresh cattle-manure about him. At last, hunger drove him to the farmhouse to beg a little food. There he was supplied with soap and water wherewith to cleanse himself; and his ablutions over, stood before the pitying family apparently free from any sign of smallpox. Next day, the farmer was down with the disease, through which his visitor nursed him, without apparently thinking of applying the remedy that had proved so efficacious in his own case; a case on which the chronicler commented thus: 'The stranger certainly had smallpox, for he gave it to another. He certainly recovered, for here he is, walking about. If the fresh manure did not absorb the disease from his system in the short time, what else did? If burying a patient up to his neck in the earth, as practised in some countries, has a beneficial effect on diseases, why should not fresh compost have double the strength as a healer? It is a straight plain case, and though not discovered by Jenner, the cure may one day rank with his preventive.'

Sir Walter Scott's piper, John Bruce, spent a whole Sunday selecting twelve stones from twelve south-running streams, with the purpose that his sick master might sleep upon them and become whole. Scott was not the man to hurt the honest fellow's feelings by ridiculing the notion of such a remedy proving of avail; so he caused Bruce to be told that the recipe was infallible; but that it was absolutely necessary to success that the stones should be wrapped in the petticoat of a widow who had never wished to marry again; upon learning which, the Highlander renounced all hope of completing the charm.

Lady Duff Gordon once gave an old Egyptian woman a powder wrapped in a fragment of the *Saturday Review*. She came again to assure her benefactress the charm was a wonderfully powerful one; for although she had not been able to wash off all the fine writing from the paper, even that little had done her a great deal of good. She would have made an excellent subject for a *Llama*.

doctor, who, if he does not happen to have any medicine handy, writes the name of the remedy he would administer on a scrap of paper, moistens it with his mouth, rolls it up in the form of a pill, which the patient tosses down his throat. In default of paper, the name of the drug is chalked on a board, and washed off again with water, which serves as a healing draught.

These easy-going practitioners might probably cite plenty of instances of the efficacy of their method. Dr John Brown of Edinburgh once gave a labourer a prescription, saying: 'Take that, and come back in a fortnight, when you will be well.' Obedient to the injunction, the patient presented himself at the fortnight's end, with a clean tongue and a happy face. Proud of the fulfilment of his promise, Dr Brown said: 'Let me see what I gave you.' 'Oh,' answered the man, 'I took it, doctor.' 'Yes, I know you did; but where is the prescription?' 'I swallowed it,' was the reply. The patient had made a pill of the paper, and faith in his physician's skill had done the rest. Faith is a rare wonder-worker. Strong in the belief that every Frank is a doctor, an old Arab, who had been partially blind from birth, pestered an English traveller into giving him a seidlitz-powder and some pomatum. Next day the chief declared that he could see better than he had done for twenty years.

A sea-captain, when one of his crew craved something for his stomach's good, on consulting his book found 'No. 15' was the thing for the occasion. Unfortunately there had been a run on that number, and the bottle was empty. Not caring to send the man away uncomfited, the skipper, remembering that eight and seven made fifteen, made up a dose from the bottles so numbered, which the seaman took with startling effects, never contemplated by himself or the cribbage-loving captain. That worthy jumped too hastily at conclusions, like the Turkish physician of whom Mr Oscanyan tells the following story. Called in to a case of typhus, the doctor in question examined the patient (an upholsterer), prescribed, and departed. Passing the house the next day, he inquired of a servant at the door if his master was dead, and to his astonishment, heard he was much better. Indoors he went, to learn from the convalescent that being consumed with thirst, he had drunk a pailful of the juice of pickled cabbage. Soon afterwards, a dealer in embroidered handkerchiefs, seized with the same malady, sent for the physician, who forthwith ordered him to take a pailful of pickled-cabbage juice. The man died next day; and the doctor set down this memorandum in his book for future guidance: 'Although in cases of typhus, pickled-cabbage juice is an efficient remedy, it is not, however, to be used unless the patient be by profession an upholsterer.'

Lady Barker's New Zealand shepherd found a somewhat similar potion of infinite use. When his mistress expressed her surprise at his possession of a bottle of Worcestershire sauce, Salter said: 'You see, mum, although we gets our health uncommon well in these salubrious mountings, still a drop of physic is often handy-like; and in a general way I always purchase myself a box of Holloway's Pills—of which you do get such a lot for your money—and also a bottle of Painkiller. But last shearing they was out o' Painkiller, so they put me up a bottle o' cain pepper, and likewise

that 'ere condiment; which was very efficacious, 'specially towards the end o' the bottle. It always took my mind off the loneliness, and cheered me up wonderful, especial if I added a little red pepper to it.'

One of the same lady's Kaffir servants suffering from a bad bilious attack, declined to be treated in a civilised way; and in a very short time reported himself perfectly well, a native doctor having bled his great toe. Still more extraordinary was the remedy concerning which Lady Barker writes: 'Tom had a frightful headache, which is not to be wondered at, considering how that boy smokes the strongest tobacco out of a cow's horn, morning, noon, and night, to say nothing of incessant snuff-taking. The first I heard of Tom's headache was when Charlie came to ask me for a remedy; which I thought very nice on his part, because he and Tom live in a chronic state of quarrelling, and half my time is taken up in keeping the peace between them. I told Charlie that I knew of no remedy for a bad headache except going to bed, and that was what I should advise Tom to do. Charlie smiled rather contemptuously, as if pitying my ignorance, and asked if I would give him a box of wooden matches. Now matches are a standing grievance in a Kaffir establishment; so I, failing to connect wooden matches and Tom's headache together, began a reproachful catalogue of how many boxes of matches he had asked for lately. Charlie hastily cut me short by saying: "But ma'm, it for make Tom well." Of course I produced a new box, and stood by to watch Charlie doctoring Tom. Match after match did Charlie strike, holding the flaming splinter up Tom's exceedingly wide nostrils, until the box was empty. Tom winced a good deal, but bore this singeing process with great fortitude. Every now and then he cried out when Charlie thrust a freshly lighted match up his nose, but on the whole he stood it bravely; and by the time the matches were all burned out, he declared his headache was quite cured, and that he was ready to go and chop wood. "It very good stuff to smell, ma'm," said Charlie; "burn de sickness away."

Whatever virtue there may be in any of the remedies of which we have written, not one among them all is so sure of effecting its end as this old 'cure for a love-fit':

Tye one end of a rope fast over a beam,  
And make a slip-noose at the other extreme;  
Then, just underneath, let a wicket be set,  
On which let the lover most manfully get.  
Then over his head let the snicket be got,  
And under one ear be well settled the knot.  
The wicket kicked down, let him take a fair  
swing,  
And leave all the rest of the work to the string!

#### THE MONTH.

##### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE *Anthracite*, a steam-yacht of seventy tons, has crossed the Atlantic from England to America in eighteen days on a consumption of nineteen tons of coal. This is the smallest steamer that has ever made the voyage under steam; and the satisfactory result is due to a persevering endeavour to construct an engine capable of working with high-pressure steam. There are, as in Colonel

Beaumont's compressed air-engine, three cylinders of different sizes, so arranged that the steam passes from one to the other with economy of power. The boiler will bear a pressure of two thousand five hundred pounds on the square inch, and contains when filled ninety gallons of water. The packing of the cylinders is 'Perkins' patent metal,' a compound of tin and copper, which requires no oil or other lubricant, and contributes importantly to the possibility of using high-pressure steam; for the boiler is thereby preserved from the injurious effect of grease and acids. None but distilled water enters the boiler; and this is used over and over again, the small quantity of waste being restored from an adjacent tank. Thus constructed, the *Anthracite* has proved that high-pressure steam may be employed with safety, and that a large economy of fuel, and consequently of space, may be effected. Ship-owners whose profits are made out of the space available for passengers or cargo, will not fail to recognise the value of these facts. And though the engine in the first instance cost more than an ordinary marine engine, a compensation may be found in the durability of the boilers and the disuse of lubricants. During three generations have the Perkins family been engaged in solving this problem; and it may be that the present generation will see high pressure become general in sea-going steamers. The results cannot as yet be foretold; but that trade and intercourse will be affected, cannot be doubted. And if the Czar's yacht *Livadia*, with her shallow draught and peculiarly shaped hull, should prove successful, will not shipbuilding undergo a wonderful change?

A few months ago, we gave a brief account of experiments made at Philadelphia with locomotives driven by compressed air. Similar experiments have been tried on tramways in the neighbourhood of Paris; but in neither case was the desired success achieved. The question, however, was not likely to be given up; for the advantage of compressed air over steam is great from the economical as well as the practical point of view. Colonel Beaumont, of the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, has for some time worked thereat, and trials of his air-engine have been made with satisfactory results. It weighs ten tons, has a reservoir in which one hundred cubic feet of air can be compressed to one thousand pounds on the square inch; and thus charged, it travelled from the Arsenal to Dartford and back, about thirty miles, in sixty-three minutes. The machinery and the wheels work in comparative silence: there is none of that noisy hiss and roar which accompanies the use of steam.

Colonel Beaumont has overcome some of the difficulties which beset former inventors, by placing three cylinders of graduated size on each side of his engine, and by applying warmth, to counteract the cold produced in the expansion of compressed air. At present, it will draw a load of sixteen tons, and is to be employed in the work of the Arsenal; and there is reason to believe that similar machinery is to be tried for propelling the torpedo boats. With a larger engine, heavier loads could be drawn: underground railways would then no longer be made stifling by the sulphurous smoke from steam locomotives, and horses would no longer be required on tramways.

It is known that attempts have been made to

propel vessels on rivers by ejecting a horizontal column of water from the stern. This column, by striking against the surrounding water, supplied the propelling power; but it was not sufficient. Mr Heathorn claims to have got over the difficulty by shewing that 'the force exerted by one fluid pouring into or against another depends on the contact of surfaces, and not on the sectional area of the flowing mass, after the flowing mass be once set in motion.' Instead, therefore, of tubes with large orifice, he makes use of tubes with narrow outlet, a mere slit, and thus obtains a large superficial contact, by ejecting water through a series of narrow openings.

The French in Algeria are continuing their experiments for the conversion of sunshine into mechanical work, by means of what is called a solar boiler; and it is now proved that, in countries where the sun does really shine, boilers may be heated and machinery kept going without the aid of fire. Whether it can be made use of for railway purposes, remains to be tried. Meanwhile, the distillation of alcohol from Barbary figs is to be carried on in a large solar boiler. There will be no expense for fuel; the figs cost next to nothing; the refuse serves as food for cattle, and alcohol will be produced at the rate of two hundred litres a day. Much advantage is anticipated; for at present, Algeria imports thirty thousand hectolitres of alcohol.

Dr Salvator Vinci, of Catania, has by 'proclamation' informed scientific societies that a great revolution is about to take place in the physical sciences, and that he will shortly demonstrate by indubitable proofs that the essence of heat, of light, of electricity, of magnetism, and of life is—Oxygen!

The audacity of American invention is proverbial: it disdains belief in the impossible. We now learn that fireproof houses can be built of cotton and straw. In preparing these materials, raw cotton of inferior quality, the scattered refuse of plantations and sweepings of factories, are mixed, and converted into a paste, which becomes as hard as stone, and is then called architectural cotton. It may be made in large slabs, whereby the building of a house would be rapid in comparison with the practice of laying brick after brick, and at about one-third of the cost.

For the other part, wheat-straw is treated in a way already known, and converted into paste-board. The sheets thus prepared are soaked in a solution which hardens the fibres, and are then compressed under enormous power into beams and boards of any required size; and the effect of the soaking is said to render them difficult of combustion. No information has reached us as regards the mode of operation, or the nature of the chemical preparations required: hence, to save trouble, we intimate that further particulars are not as yet forthcoming.

In chemical works where liquid preparations are manufactured on a large scale, wooden vessels are in certain cases made use of. But they soon rot, and to replace them is expensive. Experiments made in a manufactory of alizarine shew that if the wooden vessels are coated with a compound of paraffin and petroleum, they will last two years. The wood must be quite dry, and the coating is most effective when put on in warm weather. We are informed further, that iron

vessels may be protected by a coat of paraffin and linseed oil melted together in equal quantities. It is already known that paraffin preserves the hands from the action of alkalies, and is an excellent remedy for chapped hands.

We learn from photographic journals that henceforth the multiplication of photographic pictures will depend more on the printing-press than on sunlight; for Mr Woodbury, a name well known among artists, has demonstrated that 'any photographer who possesses a rolling-press and a supply of tinfoil can prepare a properly engraved plate.' He 'takes a positive instead of a negative to begin with, and with this produces his gelatine mould'; and when this is dry, covers it with a sheet of tinfoil, and passes it through an ordinary rolling-press. Thereby it becomes, so to speak, a plate from which photographic pictures may be printed.

During some years past, a self-registering instrument has recorded the quantity of sunshine visible at Greenwich Observatory; and Mr Ellis, one of the assistants there, has published a discussion of the record in the *Quarterly Journal* of the Meteorological Society. In 1876, he says the summer sunshine was evenly distributed, and large in amount; in 1877, the month of June was remarkable for abundant sunshine; in 1878, the summer distribution was even, but less in amount than in 1876; while in 1879, the amount was small, the month of July having been unusually deficient. Expressed in figures, the four years shew a total of four thousand eight hundred and eighty-four hours of sunshine. In the monthly totals (averaging the four years), July has the largest sum, four hundred and ninety-six hours; and December, two hundred and forty-two hours, the smallest. And here it is worth notice that, dividing the year into two portions, there is more sunshine during the half-year following the summer solstice than in the half-year preceding. 'Whether,' says Mr Ellis, 'this difference is in part accidental, or whether it be an indication of a real effect, will be more accurately determined when we have accumulated a longer series of observations.' So far, the fact of the difference is corroborated by observations on the heat of sunshine continued through twenty years. It must be borne in mind that in the paper here referred to, Mr Ellis discusses the duration only, not the heat of sunshine. In April last, he was of opinion that the first six months of the present year would be 'likely to yield a large amount of sunshine.' The quarterly Report published by the Meteorological Society shews that in the three months April—June, as observed at Croydon, there were four hundred and ninety-two hours of sunshine.

Greenwich is too near to the smoke and fogs of London to afford a perfectly fair test of quantity of sunshine. At the end of 1878, Mr Brand, Speaker of the House of Commons, had a recorder set up on his estate at Glynde, near Lewes, Sussex. The records, steadily taken from January 7, 1879 to the end of April 1880, shew that at Glynde there were in that period one hundred hours more of sunshine than at Greenwich.

Since the United States government established their admirable system of meteorological observations, now carried on under authority of the War Office at Washington, the notion that the Gulf Stream was the Father of Storms has been dissipated. For it is now known that the storms

which enrage the Atlantic and vex the shores of Europe, originate somewhere on the American continent, across which they travel at about twenty-six miles an hour. On the sea, their rate is from fourteen to fifteen miles, and their direction is so generally regular from west to east in the zone between the thirtieth and fiftieth parallels, that, as our readers know, their approach can be announced some days in advance with reasonable certainty.

At Zikawei, near Shanghai, there is an observatory conducted by members of the Society of Jesus, who, after three years of observation, find reason to believe that the storms of the North Pacific are similar to those of the North Atlantic and Europe. In the one case, as in the other, they are large aerial vortices travelling from west to east between the same parallels, but twice as fast. A similarity is also found between Atlantic hurricanes and the typhoons of the China seas: both range from south to north. In order to widen the sphere of observation, and test the conclusions already arrived at, an appeal has been addressed to ship-captains, harbour-masters, and all who may be willing to co-operate in the work; and a chart shewing the track of a storm will be published every month in the Zikawei Bulletin. These are interesting facts; and we wish success to this intelligent endeavour to increase our knowledge of the laws and operations of Nature in the domain of meteorology.

Medical men in the United States have found by years of experience that the climate of Florida is very favourable to the cure of consumption. The air is salubrious; not so damp as in some north-western territories which are thought to be dry and bracing; atmospheric changes are infrequent; rains and cloudy weather being the exception, and sunshine the rule. Moreover, there are in Florida varieties of climate—cool, semi-tropical, and tropical; and level, rolling, and hilly lands. Hence, a locality may be found suitable to the condition of the consumptive patient. At Key West, during the five cold months, when a polar winter afflicts the northern and eastern States, the mean temperature is seventy-two degrees; and at Jacksonville, fifty-eight degrees. Many patients who have resorted to Florida in the hope of cure, have made it their permanent dwelling-place; and instances have occurred in which 'hereditary transmission has died out,' and practitioners long resident in the state testify that they are acquainted with families 'born of consumptive parents, who have passed the meridian of life, and exhibit no sign of pulmonary disease.'

Invalids who shrink from a long travel by sea and land, and desire a sanatorium less far from home, should read what Sir Joseph Hooker says, in his *Journal of a Tour in Morocco and the Great Atlas*, concerning the climate of Mogador, which, as is shewn by eight years' observations, is the most equable of 'any place within the temperate zone as to which we possess accurate information.' 'Phthisis,' we are told, 'is all but completely unknown among the inhabitants of that part of Africa.' The resident physician in the course of ten years, had not had more than five cases of consumption among his very numerous native patients; and had seen instances of the remarkable curative effect of the climate on Europeans

who arrived in Mogador in an advanced stage of the disease.

The mean temperature of the summer months, that is, as derived from the eight years' period, is—June, 70·8 degrees Fahrenheit; July, 71·1; August, 71·2; and the mean of the winter months is—December, 61·4; January, 61·2; February, 61·8. From which we see, that between the hottest and coldest months of the year, the difference of temperature is ten degrees only. Of rainy days, there are on the average not more than forty-five in a year; and taking a thousand observations on the state of the sky, the proportions are—clear, 785; clouded, 175; foggy, 40. Add to this that the desert wind blows but about two days in the year, and 'is scarcely felt,' and a fair idea may be formed of the climate of Mogador, and its probable influence on diseased lungs.

From observations carefully made, it appears that the quantity of oxygen in the atmosphere is subject to considerable variations, from 20·47 per cent. to 21·01; the greatest quantity being found during north winds, and the smallest from the opposite quarter. Changes of wind commonly produce variations; but further observations must be made before the law by which they are governed will be discovered. It is thought too that they may 'shew that notwithstanding the richer vegetation of the tropics, the process of oxidation is more active than that of reduction, while the reverse is taking place in northern regions.' If the theory recently propounded by Professor Loomis be true—namely, that sudden lowerings of temperature are produced not by winds rushing from north to south, but by vertical descent of masses of cold air from upper regions of the atmosphere, then the difference in quantity of oxygen would be accounted for: there being more oxygen in the air at the sea-level than at high elevations.

Professor Rood, of Columbia College, United States, has tried the effects of mixing white light with coloured light, and has obtained results which may be interesting to artists as well as to physicists. He combines a white disk with coloured disks, and finds on rapid rotation that vermillion becomes somewhat purplish, orange becomes more red, yellow more orange, yellowish green more green, green becomes more blue green, ultramarine more violet, and purple less red, while greenish yellow remains unchanged.

In his anniversary address, the President of the Linnean Society, Dr Allman, described the aspects of vegetation as observed in certain localities on the shores of the Mediterranean, and instanced the *Eucalyptus globulus* as an important introduction from more southern latitudes. This tree, he stated, 'is planted round almost all the towns on the Riviera, and as it is of amazingly rapid growth, has already attained in many places a great size. Though destitute of the graceful form of many of our European trees, it is still a tree of striking and often picturesque aspect. The foliage is of a glaucous tint . . . and the leaves presenting their surfaces vertically to the wind, tremble like the leaf of the aspen in the gentlest breeze; and though casting but little shade, impress us, like the murmuring of running water, with a pleasant sense of coolness in the sultry summer air.'

Another Australian tree, also of rapid growth,

naturalised in the same district, is the *Casuarina*, remarkable 'by the graceful symmetry of its form, and singular pendulous ramification.' 'It has already attained,' says Dr Allman, 'a height of some thirty or forty feet; and when the wind rushes through its branches, the long melancholy sigh with which the tree responds, is unlike the sound called forth by the same cause in any other with which I am acquainted.'

In last month's issue, we made reference to Justice's Steam-Quieting Chambers, and the advantages of their use on steam-launches, &c. It may not be amiss to draw attention also to the advantages of their use on sea-going vessels. Steam is a very uproarious servant once its services are no longer required; and when a vessel is suddenly stopped in an emergency, and the valves of the boiler begin to blow off under the increasing pressure, the noise is generally so great, that it is next to impossible, if not generally altogether so, for the captain to make himself audible in giving his orders to the crew, and out of this spring disorder and cross-purposes, with the inevitable risk of loss both in lives and property. This risk might be avoided by the steam being quietly allowed to escape. These Quieting Chambers may therefore be looked upon as not only adding to the comfort of a sea-voyage, but to its percentage of safety.

#### POSTAGE-STAMP SAVINGS AND GOVERNMENT STOCKS.

Our publication for last month contained an article explanatory of the system under which the Post-Office Savings-Bank had begun to receive savings in postage-stamps—this system being then, however, extended to only ten counties, six in England, two in Scotland, and two in Ireland. This trial scheme having within these limits been found successful, the Government have, we are glad to see, issued an order extending it, on and after the 15th November current, to every Post-Office in the United Kingdom. By the recent Savings-Banks Act also, it is now open for any person to invest, at any Post-Office Savings-Bank, small sums in any one of the following Government Stocks—namely, Consols, Reduced, or New Three per Centa. The sums so invested must not be less than £10, nor exceed £100 in any one year; and the amounts charged for the purchase of stock are very small—up to £25, 9d.; £50, 1s. 3d.; £75, 1s. 9d.; £100, 2s. 3d., &c. The investment will be at the current price of the day on which it is made.

We have recently learned that the honour of originating Post-Office Savings-Banks belongs to Mr C. W. Sikes of the Huddersfield Banking Company, who drew the attention of the Government to the subject in a pamphlet as early as 1859.

#### THE SEA-SHELL MISSION.

Among the immense number and variety of Missions and Charities that exist in London, there are two that have regard in an especial degree to the enjoyments and desires of children. These are the Flower Mission and the Sea-shell Mission, the object of both of which is to supply the inmates of little sick-beds, in the densely packed city and in the hospitals, with two of the brightest pleasures in a child's life—flowers and shells. It is to the Sea-shell Mission that we would specially draw

attention at present. Its object is to give delight and amusement to the poor and, in many cases, sick children in the various Homes and Hospitals in London—few of which children have ever seen the sea—by distributing to each inmate a *box of sea-shells*, to be gathered by the more fortunate boys and girls who visit or reside at the sea-side. The Mission carries out its work in this way. If the young folks who gather shells at the sea-side, forward the same to the Sea-shell Mission, they will be placed in small wooden boxes, each holding from one hundred to five hundred shells, and sent to the various children's Homes and Hospitals. The name of each recipient is written on the box, so that each little boy or girl whose heart is made glad by the gift, will feel all the happier by the knowledge that it is his or her *own*.

This Mission was established in May 1879, and has already received over a quarter of a million of shells, contributed by one hundred and thirty-one persons, including one parcel from Spain, and a few shells from South Africa and also from the West Indies. Of this number, the Secretary states that he has yet in hand sufficient to fill five hundred boxes, which he is desirous of sending out before next Christmas. The boxes in which the shells are sent to the Homes and Hospitals cost threepence each; and he makes an appeal for one thousand threepenny-pieces to enable him to send one thousand boxes to one thousand poor and sick children in the Homes and Hospitals of London. With the assistance of two London City Missionaries, one hundred and forty boxes of shells were distributed during the month of October to one hundred and forty poor sick children in Southwark, Walworth, and Camberwell; four hundred and fifty boxes having been sent out altogether. If any of our readers would desire to assist in this unpretending yet philanthropic effort to gladden and brighten the hours of many a poor little city sufferer, full particulars can be obtained upon application to the Honorary Secretary of the Sea-shell Mission, 24 Richmond Terrace, Clapham Road, London, S.W.

#### ENGLISH PAY-HOSPITALS.

In June of this year, the Bishop of Winchester presided at the opening of a Pay-hospital in London; and in our last month's issue we took occasion to draw public attention to the obvious utility of this class of institutions. It may be mentioned, however, that while the above is the first public institution for the reception of paying patients on the 'hospital' system that has been opened, there have existed for some years in London various 'Homes' in which work of a similar kind was carried on. At No. 15 Fitzroy Square—in which Square also is situated the Hospital above alluded to—there has existed a Medical and Surgical Home since 1877, under the patronage of many of the first surgeons and physicians in London, and the superintendence of the Misses McLaughlin and Pearson. This Home is strictly private and select; has twenty beds; is conducted under the rules or regulations of any well-ordered family; and ladies, gentlemen, and children are received into it under the care of any qualified practitioner. The fees paid by the patient depend on the size and nature of the room, on the accommodation that may be required for friends, and also on the severity of the case; but

the Home has never asked for, nor received, subscriptions from the public. It is entirely self-supporting. Since it was established in 1877, over three hundred patients and friends have been received; and the death-rate has been exceptionally low.—In addition to the above, there is, among other institutions of a similar kind in London, an Invalid Ladies' Home at 90 Harley Street, having an Incurable Home at 23 Fitzroy Square; and at 3 Manchester Street, Manchester Square, there is a Surgical and Medical Home, combined with a Trained Nurses' Institution. We learn also that at the Women's Hospital, Soho Square, there are a few beds for paying patients; and a Pay-hospital for sick persons at Bolingbroke House, Wandsworth Common; for particulars of which apply to Mr J. S. Wood, Woodville, Upper Tooting, London.

#### THE CEDAR TREE.

Lay her beneath the Cedar Tree,  
Whose dark and dainty tracerie  
Shall cast its shadow on her bed,  
While solemn choirs, far overhead,  
Of cawing rooks shall to its boughs repair,  
And mourn for her that was so young and fair.

Lay her beneath the Cedar Tree,  
Where soft winds rustle fitfully;  
Where oft the timid deer shall stray  
To shelter from the noon tide ray,  
And tread the spot where, in the earth laid low,  
Sleeps one who lived and suffered long ago.

Nor mark the place with graven stone,  
Where now she lieth all alone :  
But raise where she doth sleep, a mound,  
And scatter lilies on the ground :  
Enough to shew that one doth here abide  
Who, like the flowers fading, drooped and died.

There flitting bats shall court the gloom,  
And speed in circles round her tomb ;  
And oft the glow-worm, chaste and bright,  
Shall for her honour trim his light,  
For her whose life did, like his spark, appear  
In darkness, dying when her day drew near.

Ah ! lay her in the cool deep shade  
By those o'erhanging branches made ;  
And when the summer heat is fierce,  
No baleful shaft to her shall pierce.  
Thus can she slumber on with tranquil breast,  
Who wearied of her life, and longed for rest.

When Winter's icy hand shall tear  
The leaves and strip the forest bare,  
The Cedar, clothed in verdure warm,  
Alone can shield her from the storm.  
So lay her gently down with tender love,  
Where the sad Cedar spreads its boughs above.

R. C. LEHMANN.